

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

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/058 W

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R 241200Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7129

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9775

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PL, VS

SUBJECT: FLARE-UP OVER POLDEL INVITATIONS TO NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION

1. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE GVN AND THE POLISH DELEGATION TO THE ICCS WERE STRAINED THIS WEEK AS A RESULT OF IMBROGLIO OVER POLDEL'S INVITATIONS TO POLISH NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION JULY 22. AS IN PAST, POLES NOT ONLY INVITED DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBERS OF "PRG" (22) AND DRV (10) AS OPPOSED TO ONLY SIX MEMBERS GVN DELEGATION, BUT ALSO AN ESTIMATED TEN TO FIFTEEN VIETNAMESE FROM SO-CALLED "THIRD FORCE" INCLUDING MADAME NGO BA THANH. LATTER HAD VOLUBLY HELD COURT IN CENTER OF LAST POLISH PARTY TWO MONTHS AGO.

2. GVN DISPLEASURE WAS PRESAGED BY TWO ARTICLES WHICH APPEARED IN VIETNAMESE PRESS JUST BEFORE PARTY, BUT AFTER INVITATIONS HAD BEEN ISSUED, CRITICIZING POLDEL FOR INVITING VIETNAMESE POLITICAL FIGURES. ARVN NEWSPAPER TIEN TUYEN ASSERTED "THIS ACT GOES OUTSIDE THE PRIVILEGES OF A DELEGATION TO THE ICCS IF IT IS NOT INFRINGING ON INTERNAL VIETNAMESE AFFAIRS". GVN TPJMC AT WORKING LEVEL NOTIFIED POLES THEY COULD NOT ATTEND IN VIEW IMBALANCE IN INVITATIONS AND THEREBY SOLICITED FOR THEMSELVES AN EQUAL REPRESENTATION AT RECEPTION.

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3. ACCORDING VIETNAMESE PRESS ON JULY 24, MADAME NGO BA

THANH ASSERTED SHE WAS PREVENTED FROM ATTENDING PARTY AND ILL-TREATED BY GVN SECURITY AGENTS, WHO SPRINKLED "ITCHY POWDER" ON HER. GVN SPOKESMAN DENIED THAT SHE WAS ILL-TREATED BUT STATED A NUMBER OF VIETNAMESE CITIZENS HAD BEEN BARRED FROM ATTENDING POLISH PARTY SINCE LATTER IS NOT A DIPLOMATIC MISSION, AND PRIVATE VIETNAMESE CITIZENS ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO COMMUNICATE WITH COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS. GVN SPOKESMAN ALSO QUOTED AS HAVING PUBLICLY CRITICIZED POLDEL FOR INVITATIONS TO THIRD SEGMENT.

4. POLES STATED ORALLY TO EMBOFFS AT PARTY THAT POLDEL HAS SAME PRIVILEGES AS AN EMBASSY HERE AND MERELY FOLLOWED SAME PATTERN AS FOR THEIR PREVIOUS PARTIES. POLES CONTEND THESE PARTIES AT WHICH THEY SEEK MIX VARIOUS FACTIONS ARE PART OF THEIR MEDIATION EFFORT.

5. ON JULY 24 BRIGADIER GENERAL HIEP, CHIEF OF GVN DELEGATION TO TPJMC, INFORMED EMBOFF THAT, IN DISCUSSIONS OF MATTER WITH POLISH AMBASSADOR FIJALKOWSKI, HE HAD SOUGHT LIMIT DAMAGE TO RELATIONS BETWEEN GVN AND POLDEL AND URGED FIJALKOWSKI NOT TO ESCALATE MATTER IN MANNER OF HIS REPORTING TO WARSAW. HIEP TACITLY ACKNOWLEDGED PRESS CAMPAIGN BY PROMISING FIJALKOWSKI THAT HE WOULD ASK HIS AUTHORITIES TO TRY TO GET PRESS TO LAY OFF. DISCUSSIONS INCLUDED NUMBER OF DETAILS AND OTHER UNRELATED TOPICS RE GVN/POLDEL RELATIONS. HIEP CLAIMS HE URGED FIJALKOWSKI TO COORDINATE WITH HIM AND CALL ON HIM MORE FREQUENTLY IN HOPES MISUNDERSTANDINGS COULD BE MINIMIZED. HIEP APPEARED HOPEFUL MATTER WOULD NOT ESCALATE AND THAT HE AND FIJALKOWSKI WOULD HAVE CLOSER RELATIONS IN FUTURE. AFTER MEETING AT PRESIDENT'S OFFICE MORNING JULY 24, HIEP ALSO SEEMED CONFIDENT THAT PRESS CAMPAIGN (WITH RESPECT TO POLES, IF NOT TO "THIRD FORCE") WOULD BE HALTED. LEHMANN

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